

How To Use An Interpreter?

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Following general guidelines may be helpful to you when working with a sign language interpreter:

1. Speak clearly in a normal tone and at a natural pace and do not exaggerate lip movements.
2. Speak directly to the person who is deaf or hard of hearing and avoid phrases like, "tell her" or "ask him."
3. Realize when the interpreter says, "I" or "me", that those are the direct words of the consumer who is Deaf or hard of hearing, and not the interpreter.
4. Do not speak privately to the working interpreter. Everything you say will be conveyed.
5. Because sign language is a visual language, eye contact will generally be with the interpreter, not you.
6. Situations involving interpreting for two or more hours may require more than one interpreter to reduce the possibility of errors made due to mental or physical fatigue as well as injury. Interpreting highly technical information or continuously for an hour or more may also require more than one interpreter. Interpreters should be relieved every twenty to thirty minutes in the manner least likely to disrupt the process.
7. Interpreting for a person who is deaf-blind requires essentially the same skills as those used by interpreters for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. However, the mode of communication may switch from a visual mode to a tactile mode. It is important that you are aware of the mode preferred by the consumer and that the request is made known to the interpreter.